

Dynamic Demographics

The American Community Survey (ACS) now collects timely information annually, providing more accurate demographics.



Once every ten years, as part of the census, the federal government collects rather detailed demographic, housing, economic and social characteristics from a huge sample of the U.S. population. This mammoth survey effort requires the participation of about one in six households or individuals, with the hiring and training of a large temporary workforce to gather the information.

Since a census is taken only once every ten years, the so-called long form information becomes outdated within a few years. After the 2000 Census, a new annual survey was begun to obtain up-to-date long form-type information. The American Community Survey (ACS) is now used to collect timely

and accurate information every year, providing a moving picture of demographic and economic change rather than a once-in-a-decade snapshot.

The ACS collects information from a random sample of households in all communities in the country. In any given year, each house address has about one chance in 40 of being selected to participate in the ACS, and no address will be selected more often than once every five years. The ACS is conducted under the same laws as the decennial census, providing the same confidential protections. Under the law, as part of the census, households selected are required to answer the survey.

With testing and development

complete, the ACS was fully implemented in 2005, with a complete national sample of about three million housing unit addresses surveyed. The survey is conducted throughout the year, collecting information from one-twelfth of the selected addresses each month. A new sample is selected each year. This continuous effort enables the census bureau to use experienced, full-time survey collectors.

This fall saw the first publication of annual estimates of demographic, economic, housing, and social characteristics from a complete ACS sample of responses collected during 2005. Currently data is available for Utah counties, cities, and other geographic areas with a population of 65,000 or more (see geographic area chart). By combining sampled households over three- and five-year periods, annual estimates for communities of all sizes will become available by 2010 (see publication chart).

The information collected from the ACS is needed by government at all levels—federal, state, and local to manage and evaluate programs and services, and to comply with requirements stipulated in law. Businesses, other private organizations, and individuals also make use of these community-based statistics for a host of marketing, planning, and service-delivery activities. Information has become a vital link to our economic, social, and community well-being. The American Community Survey is a major contributor of data used to make informed decisions.



See Utah's demographic, social and economic data for areas with populations over 65,000 on the following page.

Type of Data	Population Size of Area	Data for the Previous Year Released in the Summer of:							
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010+
Annual estimates	250,000+								
Annual estimates	65,000+								
3-year averages	20,000+								
5-year averages	Census Tract and Block Group*								

Data reflect American Community Survey testing through 2004
*Census tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county averaging about 4,000 inhabitants.

Source: American Community Survey

2005 American Community Survey

Demographic, Social, and Economic Data Available for the Following Utah Areas

✓	State Total	
✓	Three Congressional Districts	
✓	Ten School Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alpine • Ogden • Davis • Provo • Granite • Salt Lake City • Jordan • Washington • Nebo • Weber
✓	Five Metropolitan Areas*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logan, Utah-Idaho (Cache County, Utah and Franklin County, Idaho) • Ogden-Clearfield, Utah (Davis, Morgan and Weber Counties) • Provo-Orem, Utah (Juab and Utah Counties) • Salt Lake City, Utah (Salt Lake, Summit and Tooele Counties) • St. George, Utah (Washington County)
✓	Six Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cache • Davis • Salt Lake • Utah • Washington • Weber
✓	Seven Cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ogden • Orem • Provo • Salt Lake City • Sandy • West Jordan • West Valley City
✓	Combined Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salt Lake City-Ogden-Clearfield, Utah (Salt Lake, Tooele, Summit, Davis, Morgan, Weber and Box Elder Counties)
✓	16 Public Use Microdata Areas**	

*There is a defined urbanized area for each of the five Metropolitan Areas.

** The State of Utah is divided into 16 non-overlapping areas with at least 100,000 population.

